

Microsoft makes a big bet on esports with Xbox Live tournaments

It'll soon be easier for developers to integrate tournaments into their Xbox and Windows 10 games.



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03.16.16 in AV

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On top of offering networking compatibility with [other gaming platforms](#), Microsoft had another treat for developers at GDC this week: An easy way to create their own game tournaments with Xbox Live. Think of it as an evolution of Xbox Live's multiplayer matchmaking. The aptly titled Xbox Live Tournament Platform, which will support both Xbox One and Windows 10, is clearly meant to make Microsoft an even bigger player in the burgeoning esports market. To that end, it's also teaming up with esports companies FaceIT and ESL, who will use the platform for upcoming tournaments. The first titles to support the tournament platform should arrive by the end of the year.

Chad Gibson, a group program manager at Xbox Live, [tells Polygon](#) that the platform could be used by gamers to create a small-scale *Rocket League* tournament with friends. It could also lead to new methods of cooperative play. For example, there could be some sort of team-based tournament with a game like *The Division*.

Overall, the news makes complete sense for Microsoft in many ways. Xbox Live transformed the way console gamers play online, so why not aim for the next level and bring in tournament play? Microsoft also created an [esports league for Halo](#), so it's wise to build a solid networking layer for that sort of competition. And just like with its support for cross-platform multiplayer, it shows what's really important for Microsoft today: Creating platforms that make it indispensable to developers and gamers alike (and hopefully erase the impact of the PS4 trouncing the Xbox One this generation).